

**WILLIAMSBURG CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
MARCH 5, 2007**

The Williamsburg City Council held a work session on Monday, March 5, 2007 at 2:00 p.m., in the City Council Chambers of the Stryker Building.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Ms. Zeidler, Messrs. Haulman, Chohany, Freiling, and Braxton. Also present were City Manager Tuttle, City Attorney Phillips, and City Clerk Crist.

Staff Attending: Assistant City Manager Miller, Department Heads Nester and Yost.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Zeidler called the meeting to order.

OPEN FORUM

Mayor Zeidler asked for public comment.

No one wished to speak. The session was closed.

BACKGROUND PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

Upper Peninsula Preschool Education Advocacy Group Presentation

Clive Fenton, Advocacy Group Representative

Mr. Tuttle introduced Mr. Clive Fenton, representative for the Upper Peninsula Preschool Education Advocacy Group.

Mr. Fenton used a Powerpoint presentation to address supporting access to high quality pre-kindergarten education (slides attached). He introduced two members of the advocacy group whom were present: Ms. Sharon Keifer and Mr. Mike Ludwig. The group's objectives are to inform and increase public engagement and support for early childhood education program and ultimately to have the implementation of a voluntary universal preschool program in Virginia.

Mr. Fenton reviewed:

- Advocacy Group Membership and Objectives.
- The importance of early childhood education, especially for children of at-risk families.
- Research results of quality pre-k education versus no pre-k education.
- Local agencies that serve pre-k children, such as Child Development Resources, Bright Beginnings, and WJCC Schools.
- The challenges and impact of a growing pre-school special education population.

Mr. Fenton asked that City Council advocate with our state representatives and the Governor for quality child care on a statewide basis. He was still hoping to have the "Start Strong" program in this community, and asked that Council continue to recognize and support pre-K as an integral part of schools. Mr. Fenton emphasized that their objective is to establish a quality standard for preschool children in our society. Quality childcare makes a difference.

Mr. Fenton concluded that the economic and social benefits of early childhood education have been documented and creates a foundation for a child to grow up to be a productive citizen. He quoted the words of Brad Butler, former CEO of Procter and Gable, "It is not whether we can afford to invest; it is whether we can afford not to invest."

Mayor Zeidler thanked Mr. Fenton for his presentation about the importance of pre-school education, and noted that Council has a strong record of supporting preschool programs.

Council members and Mr. Fenton discussed:

- The importance of a child having the best possible start. It is incumbent on the community to define priorities and how funding can make the biggest difference and achieve goals. Pre-K is one of those areas.
- All kids are at risk if they are not part of a program. Budget constraints can impact and cause reduced pre school care.
- Other entities will receive Mr. Fenton's presentation: the School Board, James City and York Board of Supervisors.
- The principal objective of the program to prepare people to be good citizens within the community. The negative results from lack of early childhood education.
- The availability of childcare facilities, the difficulty of obtaining quality child care, and the cost of day care, especially for low income and working parents.
- Preschool should be provided for all children at the same level of quality no matter what the parents' ability to pay. Mr. Fenton advocated a statewide preschool program.
- The Pre-School Task Force recommendations developed several years ago.

Mr. Fenton said that he could be reached at CEFenton@msn.com.

Assessing the Future of Labor Market in Greater Williamsburg Area, (Chumara Economic and Analytics), Dick Schreiber, President, Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance

Mr. Tuttle said that the labor market study was presented last week. Mr. Schreiber was invited to present an overview to Council.

Mr. Schreiber said the partners in the study were the Work Force Investment Board, Crossroads Group, and leaders of the city and two counties. The purpose of the study was to address the profusion of help wanted signs and reports of difficulty to keep businesses open at certain times in our area. A steering committee was formed to understand if there was a problem and what the workforce would look like in five to ten years. Chumara was selected by an RFP process. They conducted a survey of businesses in the area and developers in the planning pipeline, in order to understand business expectations over the next several years.

Mr. Schreiber reviewed some of the information contained in the report. In an area of 60,000 jobs, the job vacancy rate was 7%, 4,000 jobs short to operate businesses at full capacity at a time when the unemployment rate was 2.5%. Through the responses, it was learned that businesses expected to grow over the next ten years at a rate of 3%, which means we will have 20,000 more jobs over the ten years. And, the study did not include new projects that are in the pipeline. About 51,000 jobs will be added to the economy over the next ten years. The shortage is a big problem and it is going to get worse. This could impact businesses and the economy, which could cause deterioration in the quality of life, especially if people cannot get the services they need.

Mr. Schreiber hoped to reconvene the Steering Committee, and add more members to the committee, to address the study in depth in order to come back to the governing bodies with a recommendation about how the government, business owners, and development should focus on this difficult problem. In the future, he hoped to ask for City Council's support in order to

move ahead. Many of our workers live on the Lower Peninsula. He noted that housing, transportation, training and education, are other important needs that must be addressed. Career tracks could help the hospitality industry and we need to find innovative ways to market jobs. Mayor Zeidler thanked Mr. Schreiber for the report.

Council members and Mr. Schreiber discussed:

- The unintended consequences of lifting the 30-day rule for exchange visitors.
- The need to address longer-term residency requirements of exchange visitors and the work force.
- The labor shortage and critical housing issues.
- Transportation for workers.
- The Steering Committee developing smaller groups to identify and work on issues.
- Borrowing methods from other areas that have dealt with similar issues.
- Using retired business people in the community and benefiting from their experiences.
- Methods that have been used by other areas in the country such as Ocean City, Virginia Beach, and Hilton Head.
- The motivation of developers to locate in an area that is already suffering from lack of workforce. There is a belief in the future of the hotel market; businesses come to areas where there is good quality of life. There is a belief that our economy will remain strong.

Regional Youth Violence Prevention Initiative

Sabrina Jones, Program Manager (Introduced by Chief Yost)

Chief Yost said the law enforcement agencies and schools began discussion about how to handle youth violence and gangs. The regional partners decided that a program facilitator/organizer was needed. Chief Yost introduced Sabrina Jones who was hired as Program Manager for the Regional Youth Violence Prevention Initiative.

Using a Powerpoint presentation, Ms. Jones explained the evolving initiative, data about juvenile crime in the region and the benefits of collaboration (see presentation attached)

- Vision
- Mission
- Strategic Priorities
- Crime Statistics
- DOE Report
- Department of Education Crime Statistics (Peninsula)
- Crime Statistics (by jurisdiction)
- Gang Suppression Education
- Benefits of Collaboration
- Type of Activities

Council members and Ms. Jones discussed:

- The overall structure of the Prevention Initiative and regional efforts. Ms. Jones said that she hoped to eventually find the resources to add staff to help implement the program.
- Gang behavior generally begins in middle school or high school. Most prevention programs will take place in the schools, beginning in elementary school. Teachers and law enforcement officers will be engaged in prevention activities.
- The cost of gang activity to the community and to the child. Investing in prevention.

- Gang organization and crime.

Council members appreciated Ms. Jones work. Ms. Jones provided her e-mail address, jonessy@nngov.com.

Mayor Zeidler asked that Chief Yost provide Council with additional information about reported drug arrests in the city.

Preview of March 8, 2007 Council Meeting

No additional information was requested.

City Council Communications

WADMAC: Mr. Chohany reported that Donnie Mills is the new chairman and John Bacon is the new vice-chair. They will next look at funding mechanisms to help with the committee's mission. Mayor Zeidler asked that the City Manager arrange for a showing of the new WADMAC commercial that was introduced at the Tourism Forum. Mr. Tuttle thought that it would be available at the budget work session.

Schedule of Meetings: March 2007

Council members received the monthly meeting calendar.

The Mayor pointed out that Budget Work Sessions are scheduled for March 19 and 20, 5:00 p.m., at the Municipal Building. Council will receive the City Manager's budget recommendations and hear outside agency budget requests. She noted that the meetings are open to the public.

The Mayor noted that March 7 is Arbor Day, which will be held at the Community Building.

OPEN FORUM

Mayor Zeidler asked for public comment.

No one wished to speak. The session was closed.

CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Haulman Moved that City Council go into Closed Session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia for the purpose of discussing one personnel matter per subparagraph 1, concerning appointments to boards and commissions, one property matter per subparagraph 3, regarding acquisition of property for recreation use of which discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect bargaining or negotiation strategy of public body, and one legal matter per subparagraph 7 for the purpose of consultation on specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by counsel, concerning application of the zoning ordinance. The Motion Was Seconded by Mr. Freiling.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Freiling, Braxton, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

The meeting adjourned at 4:14 p.m. The Mayor called a five-minute recess.

At 5:32 p.m. Council met in Open Session.

Mr. Haulman Moved the Certification of Closed Meeting. The Motion was Seconded by Mr. Freiling.

Recorded Vote on the Motion:

Aye: Freiling, Braxton, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

OPEN MEETING

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Date: March 5, 2007

Motion: Mr. Haulman Second: Mr. Freiling

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Williamsburg has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the City Council that such meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Williamsburg hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered by the City of Williamsburg.

VOTE:

Aye: Freiling, Braxton, Zeidler, Haulman, Chohany

No: None

Absent During Vote: None

Absent During Meeting: None

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Approved: _____

Mayor

Clerk of Council